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SERMON

(IN SUBSTANCE)

Preached Abroad,

Near MAY-FAIR CHAPEL,

On Friday Evening, Auguſt 2, 1771.

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SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed by M. LEWIS, in Paternoſter-Row;
And ſold at the Preaching Places, and at the Chapel, Alderſgate-Bars, Long-Lane, Smithfield.

MDCCLXXI. [Price 2 d.

BRITISH MUSEUM
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MAY

Advertiſement.

I HAVE endeavoured to gather up the ſubſtance of what was delivered, under the protection of God, in the open air yeſterday evening. I publiſh this ſermon for theſe reaſons. 1. To convince thoſe tranſgreſſors, who are ſeeking death in the error of their ways, that we ſpeak words of truth and ſoberneſs, and to this end that they may be ſaved. 2. To comfort the chriſtians who hazarded their lives for the Lord Jeſus, and went out of the camp, bearing the reproach of the croſs. 3. To carry inſtruction to their houſes, who are aſhamed of Chriſt, or afraid to own his cauſe. 4. To furniſh the chriſtians with a memorial of the power of God, and to bring to mind his tender mercy, to inſpire them with a love of the bleſſed and holy Jeſus, to ſtrengthen their faith, and animate their hope.

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J. NEALE.

Isa. lv. 12. Luke xxii. 37.

"He was numbered with the tranſgreſſors."

WHAT a proof is this chapter of the truth of our holy religion! Here we behold a picture of our Lord, a repreſentation of his dying love, of his precious ſacrifice, of his glorious reſt. What God by his inſpired ſervant foretold, "He ful-"filled in theſe laſt days, by Jeſus Chriſt his "only Son." He is the perſon ordained of God to bear our griefs, to carry the ſorrows of afflicted ſinners. "He was wounded for our "tranſgreſſions; he was bruiſed for our iniqui-"ties; he was oppreſſed, and brought as a lamb "to the ſlaughter; was taken from priſon and "judgment; was cut off out of the land of the "living; and he poured out his ſoul unto "death, making his grave with the wicked. "For all we like ſheep have gone aſtray; we "have turned every one to our own way." But him has God the Father ſealed, and with authority ſent into this wicked world, to bring our ſouls into his bleſſed fold, to redeem from death, and by his being numbered with tranſgreſſors, to ſave tranſgreſſors; and waſh-

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ing them in his dear blood, to make them kings and prieſts to God for ever.

Unbelief was too general in the days of Iſaiah; He pathetically laments, "Who hath believed "our report?" This miracle of love, this bleſſed Lord and Saviour, is deſpiſed by men, is rejected of his rebellious creatures; men hide their faces from him, and lightly eſteem the God of ſalvation. This is the caſe in all ages. Is it not too much ſo now? Surely the great overflowings of ungodlineſs, and the multitudes of rebellious ſinners ought to make us afraid. "He "was numbered with tranſgreſſors." I purpoſe to ſhew,

I. What is a tranſgreſſor.

II. What it is to be numbered with tranſgreſſors.

III. Why Chriſt was thus numbered.

IV. What are the benefits of this event.

I. To tranſgreſs, is to go beyond. Thus Balaam, "I cannot go beyond the word of the "Lord:" That is, I can not tranſgreſs. Here is therefore a limit not to be broken through; the will, the command, the terms of agreement to be obſerved. Such as do break through this limit, go beyond this boundary, we term tranſgreſſors. It is thus God in the firſt chapter of

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theſe prophecies laments: "I have nouriſhed and "brought up children, and they have rebelled "againſt me." The word is, 'They have tranſ-'greſſed, they have gone beyond the limits of 'filial obligation and duty.'

Here then muſt be a ſovereign power and authority, one who is a fountain of ſacred laws, and this is God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and his holy will is the law by which are marked out the limits of due obedience, a circle incloſing true felicity. But beyond is miſery, and tranſgreſſion is only death. God creates no tranſgreſſors. Angels and men, in their firſt eſtate, were holy and happy; but by tranſgreſſion they loſt this their firſt eſtate, and became accurſed and miſerable.

In ſuch is firſt an inward corrupt principle, namely, pride. By this, Satan and his angels fell, and by the ſubtilty of that prince of darkneſs fell all mankind. In man there was a change of his will which broke out into rebellious tranſgreſſion, and deed of higheſt guilt, whereby men are tranſgreſſors from the womb. The war then began on earth. Revolt, ſedition, murder, puniſhment, captivity makes every man a true Barabbas. Man is lawleſs. He maliciouſly rebels againſt his Maker, goes beyond the limits of his holy law, tranſgreſſes proudly, wanders from the true way, and blindly purſues

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the paths of death. This is the great tranſgreſſion of human nature, from which David prayed he might be innocent; for while the guilt of this remains, we are accurſed; death ſtings, the law condemns, hell torments, neither is peace ever found, but without an end, ſorrow, and torture, not to be conceived or expreſſed. Thus it is to be a tranſgreſſor. And man is a tranſgreſſor without ſhadow of reaſon; for he was laden with bleſſings innumerable by his Creator. He is a dreadful tranſgreſſor; his ſins are more than the hairs of his head; he is not weary of his rebellion; he drinks iniquity like water; he defies God and all his threatenings.

II. What it is to be numbered with tranſgreſſors?

It is to be charged with ſin. To be reckoned guilty and accurſed. So was our bleſſed Lord. "He was made to be ſin who knew no ſin." He who was the holy and the juſt, appeared as a rebel, a malefactor, one that proudly tranſgreſſed the will of God, one that boldly went beyond the limits of due allegiance. He was the brazen ſerpent in the form of a poiſonous ſinner, without the poiſon of ſin.

It is to merit and ſuffer as ſuch. Thus the dreadful iniquities laid upon our Lord cauſed him to be treated in that horrible manner recorded in the goſpels. His whole life a ſcene

of

of temptation, poverty, and ſufferings. Oh how did the ſenſe of what ſin deſerved! Oh how did the weight of guilt, preſs his agonizing ſoul! He would have died in this agony in Gethſemane, if an angel from heaven had not been ſent to ſtrengthen him for greater conflicts. Yea to ſuffer death with all its horrors.

It is to be forſaken of God. For tranſgreſſion brings into the kingdom of darkneſs where God has no fellowſhip. God is now a devouring fire; his wrath is felt with everlaſting burnings. All union is at an end: and therefore Jeſus being numbered with tranſgreſſors, crucified among thieves, and judged worſe than Barabbas, cries out on Calvary's top, "My God, my "God, why haſt thou forſaken me?"

It is to die. "For the wages of ſin is death." The law curſes ſinners. The ſoul that ſinneth ſhall die. Here is the reaſon of the cruel and accurſed death of the Son of God. Being numbered with tranſgreſſors, charged with ſin, held, condemned, and curſed by the law, he was led to be crucified. He taſted the cup, the bitter cup of death. There never was ſorrow like unto that ſorrow, which was done unto our Lord, in the day of God's fierce anger, when he was afflicted, and led as a lamb to the ſlaughter. The manner of his death was accurſed, attended with infinite torments, with unſpeakable ſhame and contempt, with horror

ror and brutality, with unrelenting rage and malice, that as he trod the dolorous way, the bloody ſpectacle, wrung tears and cries from ſurrounding crouds; and beaten boſoms, ſhaken heads, and loud declarations, witneſſed, that never did the world ſee ſuch a dreadful ſight as this.

III. But why was our Lord thus numbered with tranſgreſſors?

To become the Mediator of a better covenant. The ſanctity of God and the wickedneſs of man could never agree. It was therefore neceſſary, that ſuch a divine perſon ſhould interpoſe, who, as he was God of God, and conſubſtantial with the Father, who, being in ſuch perſonal dignity as to ſay to the Almighty, "Thou art my fel-"low," might appear worthy and able to take hold of God, and as the Son of man might alſo with arms of mercy embrace ſinful man, and like Jacob's ladder of old, touching earth and heaven, be a means to come to God.

To ſave by his blood. "For without "ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion of "ſins." And the precious blood of our Lord "was ſhed for many for the forgiveneſs of ſins." For ſin being charged upon him, the guilt thereof lay at his door; and having bound himſelf to ſuffer the puniſhment and pay the penalties of the law trangreſſed; he therefore ought

ſuffer before he entered into glory, yea to be perfected through ſufferings: being thus arraigned at the tribunal, found guilty, and condemned to die; by his blood the law is ſatisfied, by his blood the debt is paid, by his blood the puniſhment is inflicted, by this ſacrifice, and burnt-offering, juſtice has received all demands. For this he offered himſelf up on the altar of the croſs. "We have now redemption through his "blood, even the remiſſion of ſin. He that be-"lieveth ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not "ſhall be damned; he that hath the Son hath "life, but he that hath not the Son hath not "life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." There is no difference. All have ſinned. The whole world is guilty, but Chriſt has ſuffered, the juſt for the unjuſt, the godly for the ungodly. It is Chriſt that is the way, the truth, and the life; and it is by his bitter ſufferings, and accurſed death upon the croſs, that ſinners are ſaved from wrath to come.

To reduce to allegiance. Our Lord, having overcome the world, ſatan, death, and hell, aſcended up on high, led captivity captive, and received gifts for rebellious ſinners, deſcends with the power of the Holy Ghoſt to convince them of ſin, and righteouſneſs, and judgment. He comes with the power of life and ſalvation. He finds men as poor loſt ſheep, they are wandering

ing from God, tranſgreſſing his laws, ignorant of their danger. Our Lord opens their underſtandings, gives them a ſorrow for their ſins, works an hatred of the ways of darkneſs, turns them to thoſe of holineſs and righteouſneſs, ſhews their miſery and danger. Now they find Jeſus Chriſt neceſſary: Now the croſs appears lovely: Now they ſell all for the pearl of great price: Now they become diſciples of Jeſus, they love him who firſt loved them. Now they are hated of the world, perſecuted by devils, troubled by fleſh and blood, but it is given them to believe on the only begotten Son of God. He is inexpreſſibly dear. His Spirit witneſſes with their inmoſt ſouls, that they are born of God: They are no longer rebels; they are ſubjects of the King of glory; they are citizens of the New Jeruſalem; they are come to the Mount Zion and city of the living God; for their Redeemer was numbered with tranſgreſſors; and now tranſgreſſors pardoned are numbered with the ſons of God.

IV. The benefits are innumerable. Redeemed by the precious blood of Jeſus, and receiving the promiſe of the Father, we taſte the powers of the world to come, and enlightened by the grace of God, find a Goſhen, while all around is Ægypt's night. What are chriſtians delivered from? All condemnation, all curſes, all puniſhments,

all plagues, all deaths, all hells, all power of devils, all guilt of ſin. What do they experience? Pardon, peace, and divine benevolence. They are now children of an heavenly King. The Spirit of God makes them ſpiritual people; they are led by the Spirit; they are a choſen generation; a royal prieſthood; a peculiar people: Heaven is the lot of their inheritance; here they are pilgrims, ſtrangers, and ſojourners as all their fathers were. With theſe therefore God, as their own God, continually dwells. He ſtamps upon them his holy image; he fills them with the knowledge of his will; he delivers them from the hand of all their enemies; he proves them in the wilderneſs; he leads them through the waters; he preſerves them in the fire; he is their guide unto death, and thro' death to an happy eternity.

PRAYER.

O Lord God, who in thy tender mercy haſt given thy Son Jeſus to ſhed his blood upon the croſs for miſerable ſinners, we beſeech thee to grant us unfeigned repentance towards thee

thee our offended God, and alſo a lively faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo lamenting our wretchedneſs and flying to thy mercy, we may, through his moſt precious death, obtain forgiveneſs, and living on earth a life of faith, may obtain life everlaſting for thy name's ſake, O Lord, who doſt live and govern all things, world without end. Amen.

An HYMN.

Isa. liii. 12.

1.

O Love, ſurpaſſing all our thought!
O depth, O height of mercy dear!
That God's own Son, by us unſought,
Should leave yon heav'n to ſuffer here.

2.

O wonder, that all angels ſeek,
And ſeek to underſtand in vain!
What tongue the mighty love can ſpeak,
Of Chriſt who dy'd true life to gain!

3.

O why thus brought to duſt of death,
Thus humbled with affliction ſore:
In pain why yielding up thy breath,
Why red thy body thus with gore?

4.

Why number'd with two robbers vile,
Why than Barabbas counted worſe,
Why do the ſoldiers take the ſpoil,
Why thus art thou become a curſe?

5. Ah,

5.

Ah, Lord! for us poor rebels thou
Thy precious blood haſt freely pour'd;
For rebels thou thine head didſt bow,
The Saviour of the world ador'd.

6.

Welcome, Lord Jeſu! to my ſoul;
Welcome, my bleeding, dying Lamb:
Thy painful wounds ſhall make me whole,
Since Jeſus for this purpoſe came.

7.

Sing Hallelujah, praiſe the Lord,
Angels and Archangels ſing,
Eternal anthems ſhall record
The wondrous love of Chriſt our king.

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